

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-9, and 11-14 are now pending in the application. Claims 4 and 10 have been cancelled. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Applicants have attached reference DE 19955427 as requested by the Examiner.

DRAWINGS

The drawings stand objected to for certain informalities. Applicants have amended the claims as indicated above. As such, the objections to the drawings have been overcome, as the airbag housing and gas generator are no longer positively claimed. Therefore, reconsideration and removal of the objections to the drawings are respectfully requested.

SPECIFICATION

The specification stands objected to for certain informalities. Applicants have amended the specification at paragraph [0003] according to the Examiner's suggestions. However, paragraph [0016] of the specification correctly states "faces" and will therefore not be amended as suggested by the Examiner. Paragraph [0016] has been amended to include the language of claim 8. As this language is found in the claims as originally filed, it does not constitute new matter. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection are respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

With regard to rejection (a), Applicants have amended the claims to recite “an insert” rather than “an airbag housing.” In view of rejections (b), (c) and (e), Applicants have amended claims 1, 6, and 7 to remove the “or” limitations. Finally, with respect to rejection (d), Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite “a steering wheel axis.” As such, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112 have been overcome. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 AND 103

Claims 8-10 and 13-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Leibach et al. (U.S. Pat. Publication No. 2003/0038462, hereinafter “Leibach”). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Leibach.

Claims 1-7 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Leibach in view of Durre (U.S. Pat. No. 6,435,540, hereinafter “Durre”). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

At the outset, Applicants note that claims 1 and 8 have been amended to require the receiving element, or ring, to extend a length generally equal to the length of the

insert. Neither of the references discloses this claimed feature. The Examiner argues that Figure 4 of Leibach discloses insert 1 and ring 24 being the same height, thereby teaching the limitations of amended claims 1 and 8. Applicants respectfully submit that this is not true. Leibach actually shows insert 1 being substantially longer than ring 24. As such, if anything, Leibach actually teaches away from the limitations of amended claims 1 and 8.

In order to find an invention obvious in light of a combination of references, there must be something present in the teachings of those references to suggest the claimed invention to one skilled in the art. W.L. Gore & Assocs., Inc. v. Garlock, Inc., 721 F.2d 1540, 1551, 220USPQ 303, 311 (Fed. Cir. 1983)(citing In re Bergel, 292 F.2d 955, 956-57, 130 USPQ 206, 208 (CCPA 1961)). As there is no teaching or suggestion of the limitations of amended claims 1 and 8 in either Leibach or Durre, the references cannot properly form the basis for a rejection under §103. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 8 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 2, 3, 5-7, 9, and 11-14 depend from claims 1 and 8 and should be in condition for allowance for the reasons set forth above. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3, 5-9, and 11-14 are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office

Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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